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THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AS A DETERMINING FACTOR
IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

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INTRODUCTION

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AS A DETERMINING FACTOR
IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

INTRODUCTION

A. Statement of Problem and Delimitation

Missionaries in Latin America today are faced with some problems which are peculiar to that field and which present special problems because of the nature of the historical background of that country. Certain attitudes and policies now evident in the social, economic, and religious life of the continent are the results of attitudes and policies existing during the days of conquest, colonization, or independence. This study will be based upon the factors in history which have been an influence upon the Evangelical Movement in Latin America. It is not intended to be an exhaustive study, but rather a limited survey of the historical background of Spanish America and the development of the Evangelical Movement in relation to the special problems faced by Protestant missions as a result of the background. It will not deal with Portuguese Brazil, but will be based on the general policies influencing Latin America, and the general trends and movements within the Spanish dominated countries.

B. Significance of Problem

Within the last few years Latin America has become very prominent in the eyes of the population of the United States. With the increased awareness of this "one world", and with a realization of the nearness of all parts of the world to us because of better means of communication and transportation, we have suddenly become much more conscious of the continent which is closest to us.

The political "Good Neighbor Policy" and other governmental issues with Latin America were a means of awakening the thoughts of America regarding political and economic issues, and in turn there was an increased interest in the social, cultural, and religious nature of our neighboring continent. Along with this national awareness has developed a new sense of responsibility on the part of the church and her missions toward the people of this land, and at the present time Latin America is the scene of one of the most active missionary movements of the present day.

In recent years there also has been a widespread concern and interest in the problem of religious liberty in Latin America. This problem is based on the religious background and development during the past centuries. In this connection, Diffie says that the Church has been the most important influence in the

development of Latin America.

"No other single influence is so important in the history of Latin America as the Church. Religion was the all pervading influence among the Indians before the Conquest, as it was among the conquerors. No matter what aspects of Latin American life we consider, economic, social, political, or cultural, we find the Church occupying a chief position."¹

In order to be well informed, therefore, about this country, it is necessary to study the historical background in relation to the influence of the Church. This indicates that both the Catholic Church during the Colonial period, and the Evangelical Church of more recent years will be studied.

C. Method of Procedure

In investigating this problem the first approach will be historical. A brief survey will be made of the Spanish influences which determined the policies of the Conquest of Latin America. These policies will also be viewed in respect to their results on a continental scale in social, political, economic, and cultural realms. This approach will take into consideration the characteristics and influences of the Indian religions and the Roman Catholic Church in their part in the development of the country.

The next step will be a survey of the Evangelical Movement. This will consider the efforts that have been made to establish Protestantism on this con-

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1. Bailey W. Diffie, Latin American Civilization, p. 233

continent, and the opportunities provided for it through the political independence which took place during the nineteenth century. Because there has been a very rapid growth in this movement, the reasons for this growth will also be studied.

In the third chapter an attempt will be made to study the special problems that are peculiar to Evangelical Missions in these countries because of the nature of the historical growth of the continent.

D. Sources of Data

The sources of data used in this study will be histories of Latin America, books, pamphlets, and documents which record the development of the Evangelical Movement, and special studies in the problems faced by the Evangelical missions in these countries.

CHAPTER I
THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND INHERITED
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A. Introduction

In order to understand and appreciate the present conditions facing the Evangelical Church in Latin America which reveal the importance of the peculiar problems with which it is concerned, it is necessary to consider the historical background of the country in which it has grown. This would begin with factors in Spanish life that would be an influence upon the New World, most of which was under the Royal Crown of Spain. A study of the early conquest, the social, political, and economic policies of the conquistadores, the movements of independence, and the religions in South America provide the bases for further consideration of the Evangelical Movement and the problems which face it.

B. The Spanish Background which Influenced
the New World

In his treatment of the European background of the New World, Bailey W. Diffie says that "Europeans could hardly have colonized America had it not been for the political and economic growth which characterized

Europe during the centuries prior to 1500."¹ During this time Spain was developing in lines which would later show their influence in the colonial system. A view into the history of Spain before the Conquest helps us to understand the character of the Spaniards who came to America and to determine the main factors which influenced her Colonial policy and her achievements.

1. The Position of the Monarchy

In the years preceding the discovery of the New World, Spain was an absolute monarchy with great power. This monarchy held absolute sway over the social and economic life of the nation, and was one with the prevailing religious attitudes.

2. The Economic Position of the Country

Commerce was encouraged by the Crown, and the merchant trade between countries was one of the influences leading to the age of discovery. On the home peninsula, industries and manufacturing had begun to flourish, especially the production of silk and woollens and swords. The merchant marine developed to carry on the trade, and along with it the navy took its place. Spain was on the threshold of a very prosperous era, and a desire for wealth and power led on to the conquest of

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1. Bailey W. Diffie, Latin American Civilization, p. 28.

the New World.

3. Social Classes in Spain

The population of Spain could be divided into three social classes. The high class consisted of the nobility and the clergy, who were very wealthy. The second class was composed of the lower nobility who were not wealthy, but who despised manual labor; therefore they were supported by the toil of peasants who worked for them in a semi-servile condition. The lower class included the agricultural laborers and industrial workers. Rippy indicates the status of this class in the following statement:

"Although serfdom was on its way to extinction, the semi-feudal institution called *encomienda* still persisted in some quarters, free peasants or smaller land-owners 'commending' themselves to a powerful noble in the community and rendering him certain services in return for protection."²

This lower class also consisted of the personal servants, tenants, and beggars.

4. Religious Influences

The greatest influence to be expressed in the conquest of the New World was that which was found in the religious life of Spain. The crusades were an example of the religious fervor of the country, and that religious

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2. J. Fred Rippy, *Historical Evolution of Hispanic America*, p. 41

fervor became a very strong factor in the Spanish Conquest. At the conclusion of the Moorish wars, there was still an intense crusading spirit which was reflected throughout the whole of Spain. Munro tells us of the importance of this spirit.

"Generations of almost constant fighting had developed in them the audacity and indomitable courage which made possible the achievements of the conquistadores."³

In Spain there was a unique union of Church and State where the king had acquired great ecclesiastical power from the pope. Wade Crawford Barclay gives this statement concerning the union:

"The Church was a State-Church, just as the State was a Church-State. So intricately were the functions of the two interwoven that it is quite impossible to discover the fine line which divided one from the other."⁴

Thus a religious nationalism had grown up, and in it a difference of faith was intolerable. The crusades had already promoted a spirit of intolerance which paved the way for the Inquisition.

In 1478 the Inquisition was established for the purpose of suppressing heretics. In 1542 another special Inquisition was set up for "the purpose of suppressing Protestantism. The Evangelical groups were persecuted

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3. Dana Gardner Munro, The Latin American Republics, p. 27

4. Wade Crawford Barclay, Greater Good Neighbor Policy, p. 58, quoted from Mendieta, Historia Ecclesiastica Indiana, III, 203 f.

with fanatical fury."⁵

"Out of the religious background...came the Spaniard with a new sense of mission," says Rycroft. "The Conquest and Colonization of the New World were undertaken as a religious crusade."⁶ In addition to the desire for wealth and power, one of the motives of the Spaniard was the intent to bring lands and people as converts of Christ.

This was the background upon which the conquest of the New World grew. The patriotism to Spain was expressed by a fanatical religion which was seeking to expand, both in terms of converts and material wealth, and this expansion was bound together with the drive for land and trade which marked the period of discovery.

C. Influence of Spain's History on her Colonial Policy

During this period of powerful monarchical control and political and religious unity, the political organization within Spain was elaborate and the country was in a period of prosperity. There are certain of the main characteristics of such a situation that could be expected to be found as influences upon the Colonial policy.

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5. Lars P. Qualben, A History of the Christian Church
p. 306

6. W. Stanley Rycroft, On This Foundation, p. 47

First, where the monarch was strong and possessed great power in the country, the colonies were considered as a possession of the Crown. Benefits from the country went to the monarch and those who were his favorites. The governing agencies in the colony were directed by the king who might appoint such officials as he desired. It was to be expected that the officials and governing institutions would correspond to those in Spain.⁷

Where the church and state are so closely intertwined in one country, it can be expected that the same relationship will carry over into the colonies. Intolerance of religious beliefs and foreigners in Spain meant that an attempt would be made to supplant the existing Indian religions with Catholicism, and that all who were not devout Catholics would be kept out. A strong missionary group could therefore be expected in the new colonies.

Because of the existing dislike of manual labor in Spain herself, it was not strange that the same system of large landed estates worked by laborers from the lower class was transferred to the New World.

All these factors were an influence on the policies of Spain in her conquest of the New World and in the settling of it.

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7. Cf. Rippy, op.cit., p. 44

D. The Conquest and the Policies of the Conquistadores

1. The Exploration and Subjugation of the Indians

The Spanish exploration and claiming of the New World was rapid. The exploration began with the voyages of Columbus, and during the century that followed, most of the coast lines and river basins were explored. All of the semi-civilized Indians were conquered as well as many of the wilder tribes. Speer says that the time element involved in the Conquest was extraordinary.

"The rapidity with which the Spanish explorers overran the western and southern sections of the continent is extraordinary. In fifty years they had laid the foundations of practically all the Spanish states ...One reason for the rapidity of the conquest was the fact that the Spaniards had not come as agricultural settlers, but as adventurers for gold. They were looking for quick and easy wealth."⁸

The conquering of the semi-civilized Indian tribes involved struggle and bloodshed, but in every instance the Spaniards eventually won and were rewarded by the booty they collected. The Aztec Empire was subjugated by Hernando Cortes after a bloody battle, a flight, and a return. Surrounding tribes in every direction were commanded to submit to the Spaniards, and in a few years this task was accomplished and several million dollars of booty collected for the Crown.

Lieutenants of Cortes achieved the conquest

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8. Robert E. Speer, South American Problems, p. 11

of the Maya Empire with much cruelty and difficulty because of the power of the Indians and the hardships of the climate. Even after their power was broken they continued to be a dangerous tribe of Indians.

The overthrow of the Incas by Francisco Pizarro is one of the most-well known and desperate of all the battles. It was planned unsuccessfully for years before Pizarro entered the Inca city of Cajamarca in 1531 and seized the chief of the Incas. Millions of dollars were collected from Atahualpa, the chief, for his ransom, and then he was executed. While Pizarro was away fighting for other cities, the Indians rallied, but the Spaniards eventually won. It was not until the middle of the sixteenth century that the country was peaceful again because the Spaniards were fighting among themselves for the spoils and booty.

The Pueblos were the last of the semi-civilized Indians to be conquered and subjugated. From 1598 to 1613 the Spaniards succeeded in pacifying the Indians and founding settlements. Thus all of the greater powers among the Indians were brought to submission to Spain. It was not their strength that won these battles for them, but their strategy and the fact that they had many Indian allies.

2. The Exploration of the Interior

The exploration of the interior and the con-

quering of the more backward tribes followed the subjugation of the semi-civilized tribes, all of which were in the coastal regions. There is not as much of interest known about the conquest of the less advanced tribes, but the undertaking was very difficult and yielded much treasure. Most of the interior was very rapidly explored because fabulous treasure had already been exploited and there were great hopes for riches in the interior. The suffering and loss of life involved was great because of the tropical heat, jungles, floods, and pestilence, but much knowledge of the interior was gained.

3. Intermingling of Races

Because the conquistadores did not come to the New World to settle and make their home, but rather to exploit the country and gain fabulous wealth, they did not bring women from Spain with them. Thus there was soon much mixing of races, and soon after the Conquest there was even a slave traffic of young Indian women. It was not long before a large part of the population of the country was a mixture of European, Indian, and Negro. The mestizos (mixture of Indian and Spanish) increased the most rapidly, forming a middle class that had neither the status of the Spaniard or of the Indian. At first there seemed to be no racial barrier, but when the colonial system began to function, the mestizo and Indian had no place in its rule. The mestizos were legally

unable to inherit the social position of their fathers, and yet they did not have any of the land which had been left to the Indians.

Many names were used to distinguish the degrees of mixture between the races because this often determined legal and social position. They can be summed up in five general classes: (1) The Spaniard, who could have full legal privileges; (2) The mestizo, who at first had no place in the Colonial system, but in time was able to take advantage of superior opportunity; (3) The Mulatto, of Spanish and Negro descent, who lacked legal status; (4) The Negro, who was brought in as a slave, and if free, still faced the possibility of enslavement; (5) The Indian, whose position will be discussed later.

In addition to these racial classes, there were two social classes among the Spaniards which caused much jealousy and enmity. The Peninsulares were those who were born in Spain, and therefore were accorded the greatest privileges in the Colonies. The Creoles were those of Spanish blood who were born in America. Regardless of their qualifications in education, or of the social standing of their families, they could never be equal to those born in Spain. These two classes became very significant socially and economically during the eighteenth century.

4. The Governing of the Colonies

Back of the Spanish Colonial policy was the fundamental concept that the new region belonged to the Spanish monarchs. According to Rippy, this concept had a far-reaching effect in the New World.

"They possessed not only the sovereign rights but the property rights, and every privilege and position whether economic, political, or religious, must come from them. It was on this basis that the conquest, occupation, and government of the New World were achieved. The undertaking was 'by and for the crown, not the Spanish nation,' and it was placed immediately and thoroughly under the care of officers appointed by the crown and responsible directly to it."⁹

The king rewarded the conquistadores by giving them areas of land which they had conquered. Along with this came the right to use Indian labor to work the land. The conquistadores, who settled in the most civilized Indian communities, were given the power to appoint the municipal officers for that community for the first year, and to bestow lands upon their followers according to the merit of the services that they had rendered during the conquest, and according to the number of family dependents. Most of these were given a house and lot in town and an agricultural plot.

The Colonies were governed by the king through viceroys, governors, captains-general, and many smaller officials. Every official of much authority was a Spaniard, and the upper class was chiefly of the aris-

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9. Rippy, op.cit., p. 56

tocracy of Spain. Self-government was allowed only in the town councils, and the royal officials sat in on these meetings.

In every settlement there were royal officials who kept account of all treasure and sources of wealth. The king and the conqueror were each to have one-fifth of the treasure. Two or three of these royal treasury officials resided in each town and sat in the town councils where their voice was an effective instrument.

Along with the conquistador and his followers and the royal officials, there were usually a large number of carefully chosen missionaries. It was largely through the work of the Church's frontier missions that the primitive Indians were brought under Spanish control, and in addition, it was the duty of the missionaries to effect a spiritual conquest in them. Once under the control of Spain, they were brought into villages where their spiritual and economic life was dominated by the missionaries.

The chief interest of the king and the conquistadores in the New World was in the wealth that they took from the mines and exploited from the natives. Their first purpose was to seek for gold and silver, but eventually some turned to agriculture. The Spaniards, however, had a distaste for manual labor and rural life, and so used native labor to farm their lands.

The economic life in the Colonies was arranged for the benefit of the merchants in Spain; consequently there were economic burdens upon the residents of the new settlements. Hulbert indicates that trade, specifically, was carried on by Spain without competition.

"Nothing could be raised in the colonies that competed with any product Spanish traders could send, even though they often had to buy extra stock from France, Holland, and England to supply the colonists. The colonists had to pay the original price, plus many taxes."¹⁰

Thus the Spanish crown ruled the Colonies closely and was influential in controlling every part of the colonial life.

5. The Status of the Native Peasant

The Conquest and subsequent readjustments were destructive to the native races. As a result of the war, of disease brought in by the white man, and of hard labor and starvation, some Indian tribes almost became extinct. Legally, the Indians were not slaves under the Spanish rule, but their actual social status was not much higher than slavery. They were forced to work for the Spaniards, and many times their wages were withheld. All able-bodied, male Indians were compelled to pay tribute to the Crown.

There were two phases in which the Indian was

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directly controlled by the Spaniards. Many of the Indians were laborers on the large estates of the conquerors, and many of them were subjected to work in the mines. The feudal system which was transferred from Spain to the New World will be considered first.

a. The Laborer in the Feudal System

One of the first institutions to be established in Spanish America was the feudal system of land ownership, and necessarily involved with that was the servitude of the Indians. According to royal decree, the best lands were allotted to followers of the Crown. The men of high rank received the plots which were large, and humbler families received small lots of a hundred acres. In return for this land, the owners were to support the Crown, keep any road on his land in repair, and see that the fields and mines were properly worked.

The Spanish Colonist was to gather the Indians into villages near the white settlements where he was to be their protector and see that they were instructed in the Christian faith. These Indians could be compelled to work as free men and for wages. "Thus originated the encomienda system..." states Munro, "which became one of the most important institutions of Spain's American Colonies."¹¹ The estate with its Indian laborers was

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11. Munro, op.cit., p. 34

called the encomienda, and the land owner was the encomendero.

A great many of the Indians were free and living where the conquerors had not occupied, but the large proportion of them continued for the time to be subject to the encomienda, where contrary to royal orders, they were practically enslaved. The stated motive of the encomiendas was the spiritual and worldly welfare of the Indians. The encomendero was to care for their moral instruction and instruction in the Catholic religion, and took an oath to treat his Indians well. If he did not do so, he was to be deprived of his position. The Indians were to be provided with a hut, garden plot, and a certain food supply, and in return they served the encomendero in working his lands.¹²

The encomendero had the right to pass his encomienda on to his immediate heir, and often it was continued as long as the third and fourth generation. Division of the large estates was discouraged, and so most of them were not efficiently cultivated. The Indian laborers were ignorant of agricultural methods and often unwilling to work. The implements which were used were primitive and inadequate for the work that was to be done over so large an area.

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12. Cf. Munro, op.cit., p. 60

The encomienda system led to shocking abuses in places, for the encomendero often paid little attention to his obligations and exploited the Indians. Spain passed laws to protect the Indian, but they could not control the Colonists. In this connection Rippy states that a whole series of specific laws were passed to prevent specific abuses.

"In 1601 a celebrated cedula (decree) dealing with personal service was promulgated. Among other things it provided that the natives should no longer be distributed for forced labor in fields, stock ranches, .."¹³

But the decrees were evaded and not carried out. There were frequent official admissions that the enforcements were not effective. Many other laws were passed concerning the status of the Indian, but none of them had much effect.

Not all of the Indians were overworked slaves. Some of them were prosperous to a certain degree, but their condition varied in different provinces. But the Indians continued to do the hard work for all the other classes in the community, and their reward in return was very small.

b. The Laborer in the Mines

One of the most cruel forms of work forced

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upon the Indian was the work in the mines. They were often taken away from their accustomed habitation for long periods of time and subjected to severe hardship. Many of the encomenderos hired their Indians out to miners as burden bearers. Long trains of Indians carrying heavy burdens were customary. This resulted in great loss of life, as did also the actual labor in the mines.

6. The Later Colonial Period

By the end of the sixteenth century the characteristics of colonial life were quite well-established, and little change could be seen by the beginning of the eighteenth century. Weakness in the home government in Spain was reflected in the New World by the fact that there was little economic or social progress. Spain's exclusive policy in regard to Latin America, as well as her geographical isolation, kept the continent cut off from the rest of the world.

By the close of the sixteenth century, the place of the Indian in society was also established, and there was little change during the remainder of the Colonial period.

There was less achievement during the seventeenth century than previously. Spanish immigrants did enter the country, and Negro slaves were imported to do the labor which the Indians could not do, and to replace the many Indians who had died. There was an advance in

agriculture, and a number of schools were founded. The progress, which was comparatively slow, can be explained by the handicaps which were presented, however,

In Spain there was no constructive Colonial policy as it was a period of decline and poverty. Heavy taxes were set up, and Indian tributes were multiplied. On the continent there were geographical handicaps. Much of the area which had been claimed was tropical and contained jungles infested by disease and pests. There were two desert regions, and the mountain regions, on the other hand, were too cold and high for habitation. Hostile Indians on the frontier still prevented the settlement of all the land. Therefore Colonial life continued in the centers already established.

While the language of the mother country had been introduced, most of the natives could not write or speak Spanish, and still preferred to use their native tongue. Communications were slow and uncertain, and transportation was difficult because of the few roads.

Thus the conditions at the beginning of the eighteenth century were very similar to those at the end of the period of conquest and early settlement.

E. The Struggle for Independence

1. The Causes of the Revolution

The original loyalty of Spanish America to

Spain was fostered by the fact that she was geographically isolated from the rest of the world and had no means of communication with other countries because of the barriers set up by Spain herself. The privileges of the merchants and landowners in the New World depended upon their connection with the royalty in Spain. The Catholic Church was the Church of Latin America as well as of Spain, and thus the two countries were bound together. These factors kept the new continent loyal to her mother country.

a. Contact with Outside Revolutionary Ideas

After Spain relaxed her trade restrictions on the Colonies, there was more contact with the outside world. Travel was becoming less difficult and expensive, and a number of the inhabitants were going abroad. Those who traveled came in contact with the ideas of other countries. Some books with revolutionary ideas were secretly circulated, and could not be stopped by the Inquisition. There grew a gradual discontent among all the classes and sections of the population. There was misgovernment and corruption, and the creoles, who could have no official position, hated the peninsular Spaniards who controlled the Colonial life. With this as a background, Munro makes the following statement:

"Little wonder that the creoles felt they were being exploited by an alien ruling class, and that even those who were sentimentally loyal to the King of

Spain were eager to oust the King's local representatives and replace them by natives when the opportunity offered."¹⁴

In the latter part of the eighteenth century there was a series of revolts that indicated discontent, but most of the population was still loyal to the Crown. Francisco de Miranda, the most famous forerunner of Spanish American Independence, devoted his life to bring independence to South America, but was not able to achieve his desire.

b. French Occupation of Spain

It was the occupation of Spain by French troops in 1808 that finally brought on the wars for independence. When Napoleon's attack in 1810 made Spain's position seem hopeless, the choice before the Colonists was between French domination and independence. At this time some cities set up their own governments with creoles in power.

2. The Wars for Independence

a. Opposition to Independence Within the Country

Many of the native leaders did not anticipate that the growing dissatisfaction would be so far-reaching in its effects. They had contemplated the creation of autonomous states under creole control, but still sub-

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14. Munro, op.cit., p. 150

ject to the King.¹⁵ The conflict that followed was not between Spain and her Colonies, but was a civil war in the Colonies themselves. The peninsular Spaniards and some creoles whose own welfare was centered in Spain, opposed the revolt. The Church, naturally, was opposed to independence also. Those priests who advocated independence from the mother country were arrested, excommunicated, and persecuted.¹⁶

b. Periods of the Wars

The first part of the independence movement was marked by creole governments set up in the larger cities, and a few minor revolts. Actually most of the territory was still under Spain and there were no decisive victories over the royalists.

The actual organized battles which began about 1810 mark a second period in the independence movement. The unique thing about the colonial struggle was that it was fought over an entire continent in three distinct movements. The leader in Mexico was M^lguel Hidalgo Y Costilla, a priest who was in trouble with the Inquisition because of his revolutionary attitudes. In the northern provinces the movement was led by Simon Bolivar. In Argentina and Chile the third movement was under San Martin. The fighting lasted for fifteen years in which

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15. Ibid., p. 159

16. Carleton Beals, America South, p. 291

there were many set backs especially caused by inadequate forces.

In 1822 San Martin and Bolivar met at Guayaquil. Following the conference, San Martin withdrew in favor of Bolivar and exiled himself to England. Bolivar continued the campaigns, and in 1824 the last stand of Spanish troops was defeated. Although Spain had lost South America, neither she nor the Catholic Church would recognize the independence of the Colonies until many years later.

F. Religions in Latin America

1. The Religions of the Indian

The Indians of Latin America before the Conquest were zealously religious. The leading Indian tribes had some concept of a supreme god, but there were also a great many minor gods who each had a special function. Among the Aztecs alone there were about thirteen principal gods and two hundred minor gods. The emphasis on religion is illustrated by the tremendous temples which were built by the semi-civilized tribes, and idols found in the temples, forests, hills, and high mountains.

There were gods to serve every phase of life, and idols to represent all these. There were idols of human form, animals, birds, insects, fish, and idols to represent the fire, water, and earth.

In almost all of the religions there was human sacrifice. The Incas offered themselves as sacrifices,

understanding that they would go directly to serve the¹⁷ god they were worshipping. Sacrifices were also made to appease the wrath of the gods.

There were certain pagan concepts that were very similar to the concepts of the Christian religion, and this similarity was to play an important part in the later attitude of the Catholic missionaries toward the Indian religions. In regard to this Diffie says that those which seemed most similar to Christianity were: "belief in the immortality of the soul, the expected return of a Messiah, church organization, monasteries, and convents, and the use of the cross, confession, baptism,¹⁸ and communion."

It was these pagan religions combined with the religion brought with the conquistadores that were to determine the type of religion in the Colonies.

2. The Introduction of Catholicism

a. The Attitude of the Crown

In view of the intense religious fervor of the Spaniards, it is not surprising that they determined to make religion just as powerful a force in the New World as in the Old. The monarchs of Spain professed to have more regard for the augmentation of the faith than for

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17. Cf. Diffie, op.cit., p. 239

18. Ibid., p. 242

any thing else.¹⁹ They were "animated by a deeper and more sincere desire to extend Christ's kingdom than to enlarge their own,"²⁰ says Speer. Cortes not only used the cross as his battle standard, but also preached to the Indians, destroyed their idols, forbade human sacrifice, and petitioned to the king for missionaries to the Aztecs. These were chosen with great care. There was a real effort to make Christianity a reality in the lives of the Indians. Because of the similarities of Catholic symbols to some of the native symbols, the ones with which the Indians were familiar were permitted to be used instead of the traditional Christian symbols. Seeing the reverence paid to the symbol of the eagle, Cortes permitted it to represent the Holy Spirit instead of the dove. Native songs and dances were incorporated into the church service, and Christian shrines substituted for pagan idols or sacred spots.

b. The Place of Education

Many of the earlier priests were intensely earnest in their mission. Their conviction was that salvation was through absolute obedience to the teachings of the Church; so they started schools for the children and tried to teach the adults. The first ideal was to have many schools, but soon it became the general

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19. Cf. Diffie, op. cit., p. 246

20. Speer, op.cit., p. 113

belief that it was useful only for the upper class, and to train for government positions and the priesthood. Thus the masses remained illiterate and the Indians, mostly, did not even learn to speak Spanish. The main teachings consisted of the Lord's Prayer, prayers to the Virgin, how to make the sign of the cross, and how to kneel before the altar. In the schools, says Rippy, "the children were taught to memorize but not to think. Formalities and indoctrination were emphasized rather than the training of character and the mind."²¹

c. The Inquisition

The conviction that salvation was through absolute obedience to the teachings of the church bore also the demand of uniformity of belief. A branch of the Tribunal of the Inquisition was established in Lima to shield the intellectual growth of the colonists and combat unorthodox ideas. The organization had already existed in Europe for over a century to stamp out laxity among the clergy and to combat the ideas of the Reformation. In Latin America, however, control over the Indians, who were considered to be too ignorant of the teachings of the Church, was not given to them. The authorities had control over what the Colonists read, for no book could be printed or imported without their per-

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21. Rippy, op.cit., p. 111

mission, and an attempt was made to exclude all literature that might endanger religious orthodoxy or political loyalty.²²

The Inquisition was actively supported in America, and according to Diffie, was very powerful.

"A rigorous spy system thus made it dangerous to confide 'heretical thoughts' to one's most intimate relations...The slightest mental reservation about the divine source and supreme power of the Church was considered dangerous. Not only this, but the agents of the Church were considered as divinely guided, and no one might oppose them..

"Fines, imprisonment, flogging, consignment to the galleys, and exile were the usual punishments, and with these the Inquisition stifled freedom of thought, preventing exchange of ideas...and rigorously censored reading matter brought into or published in America."²³

d. The Influence upon the Indian

At the time of the Conquest, the Indians near the Spanish settlements were outwardly converted. It was the duty of the Colonists to see that they were instructed in the faith, and the law required that they be assembled daily for religious instruction. It was one of the purposes of the encomienda system to teach and convert the Indians.

To a certain degree the Indians obeyed and respected the church because it was sometimes their protector. When the Church had gained authority over the Indians, it also kept them submissive to the Crown. The

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22. Cf. Munro, op.cit., p. 81

23. Diffie, op.cit., p. 263

greatest work on the frontier was done by the missionaries who penetrated inaccessible mountains and jungles to preach the gospel. This frontier work became the chief means through which the Spanish dominions expanded.

Roman Catholicism was implanted in the masses of Indians, but many of them were imperfectly Christianized, if at all. Hulbert says that the religion which the Indians practiced did not resemble Christianity in many ways.

"As the native languages were too limited to express Christian doctrine, friars had reduced religion to ritual and acceptance of a simple creed. The distinguishing characteristics of Christian symbolism were fast disappearing."²⁴

Pagan festivals were allowed to infiltrate into the religious ceremonies. Dances were allowed on certain religious occasions after mass. Certain pagan feasts were so deeply rooted that they could not be removed and therefore were permitted to remain under the cover of similar Christian festivals. The custom of offerings placed before images was allowed to continue, and some of the dieties were interchanged with Christian names.

After the first few years of the Conquest, many of the clergy lost their first missionary zeal. As a whole, the Church built ornate churches by the labor of Indians who were assessed in goods and money to pay

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24. Hulbert, op.cit., p. 33

for them. According to Hulbert, the "purification of the clergy which had been going on in Spain as a counter-reformation to the movement started by Luther did not cross the ocean."²⁵

e. The Effects of the Independence upon Catholicism

Although the church had opposed the independence and refused to recognize the new countries, Catholicism was still the state religion. It "still dominated the minds and consciences of the masses of the people," says Munro, "and controlled their personal lives as it had during the colonial period."²⁶

f. Summary of the Influence of Catholicism

This picture does not fit the whole church, for there were a few priests who refused to join in exploiting and who protected their parishioners. But unfortunately the work of conversion was made difficult by the example of many of the Spaniards. "The word Christian became synonymous in the minds of many of the Indians with a being who came to kill and plunder them,"²⁷ says Diffie.

Mr. Diffie sums up the effect of Roman Catholicism as follows:

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25. Ibid., p. 25

26. Munro, op.cit., p. 192

27. Diffie, op.cit., p. 256

"The obligation to convert the Indians had been carried out zealously by both Church and Crown. The missionaries who accompanied the conquistadores, destroying idols and native shrines, establishing churches and monasteries, and making the most of the similarities between native religious practices and those of Christianity, had easily brought the Indians under the domination of the Catholic Church. In organization, the Church remained a completely Spanish institution, but the Indian masses continued to serve the imported religion as they had served their own priesthods. Church property increased, its influence in government grew stronger, and its hold upon the intellectual life of the colonies was all but absolute."²⁸

G. Summary

In this chapter an attempt was made to survey briefly the history of Latin America and thereby provide the basis for a further study of the Evangelical Movement and the problems it faces because of the nature of the historical background.

The first approach was to view the influences upon the settlement of the New World as they were formed in Spain. This dealt with the monarchy, the economic status, social classes, and the religious influence in Spain. Then the influence of Spain's history on her colonial policy was shown.

The Conquest was studied in terms of the policies of the conquistadores. As a result of the Conquest, the land was settled by those who were hunting for gold and treasure, and who, in the process of this

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28. Ibid., p. 269

search, exploited and subjugated the Indian tribes. Because no women were brought from Spain, there was a resultant intermingling of races, which led to a class consciousness. The conquerors were given land grants, which included the service of the Indians on the land. Thus a feudal system was introduced into Latin America.

A rapid survey of the movement of independence shows the causes of the revolution and wars for independence. The chapter is closed with a consideration of the religions in South America, showing how the Spaniards attempted to plant Christianity in the place of the pagan religions, but how the result was actually a combination of the Indian religions and Catholicism.

CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT

A. Introduction

The establishment of the Evangelical Movement in Latin America has been very retarded in comparison to the work of modern Protestant missions in other countries. The fundamental reasons for this delay in progress can be centered in influences related to the historical background. The purpose of this chapter is to show the development of the Evangelical Movement in the historical setting which was laid before it. This will include a study of the efforts to establish Protestantism during the time when Spain was in complete control of the Spanish Colonies, a survey of the favorable opportunities provided by the political revolutions, and a study of the recent rapid growth of Evangelical Missions which has been phenomenal.

B. Early Efforts to Establish Protestantism (Prior to 1800)

1. The Status of Catholicism and Protestantism in the New World

The preceding chapter has shown that the Roman Catholic Church was introduced along with the Conquest of the continent. The missionaries of the Church were in the New World from the time of its discovery, conquest,

and colonization. Shortly after the appearance of the Roman Catholic Church, there were a few attempts by the Protestants to enter the same continent, but there was no favorable ground for their progress. Bishop Neely has stated this fact in his treatment of the missionary problems of Latin America.

"South America in the early days never had an adequate opportunity to accept the influence of Protestantism. While Protestant missions appeared early, they were either soon expelled by force or were restricted in their scope to those who had come from Protestant countries."¹

2. Reasons for the Delay in the Establishment of Protestantism

a. Spain's Attitude Toward Protestantism

Because Spain undertook the conquest of the New World as a spiritual conquest as well as a territorial claim, the religion of Spain was promoted by the Crown, and that, as was seen in the first chapter, was Catholicism. It was part of the colonial policy that no one was admitted within the Colonies unless he was an adherent to the teachings of the Church. Within Latin America itself the Inquisition acted to suppress all heretics and to prohibit the entrance of all literature not approved by the Church. Thus Protestant missions were outwardly restricted, and there was little hope for the growth of any group outside of the Catholic Church.

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1. Bishop Thomas B. Neely, South America; Its Missionary Problems, p. 189

b. The Attitude of the Protestant Church Toward Foreign Missions

At the same time that the Latin American continent was being explored and colonized, the Protestant Church had developed from the Reformation in Europe. The Evangelical Church was not yet even well-organized, and it was not until the end of the eighteenth century that the whole Church accepted foreign missions as its task.²

Thus it is apparent that there could be no Protestant influence upon Latin America immediately upon the discovery and Conquest because of the recent formation of the Protestant Church; and further, as long as Latin America was controlled by an oligarchy, there was little hope of any foothold for Protestantism in Latin America.³

3. The First Protestant Work in Latin America

It is of interest to note that the first Protestant efforts in Latin America were not in the Spanish Colonies, but in Portuguese dominated Brazil. This can be attributed to the fact that Portugal was not as strict as Spain in her immigration policies. It is also apparent that Brazil is geographically in the most favorable location for travel from Europe to South America.

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2. Cf. J. H. McLean, The Living Christ For Latin America, p. 109

3. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 111

a. The Huguenots in Brazil

In 1555 and 1558 the French Huguenots made two expeditions to Brazil to form a Huguenot colony and to search for safety from persecution. Fourteen students of theology chosen by John Calvin were among those in the second expedition, but they worked with the Europeans and not with the native Indians. Mackay says that this was an attempt to "wrest Brazil from the Portuguese, and to establish the Protestant Calvinistic Faith."⁴ In 1567, however, the plan failed and the colonists were driven out.

b. The Lutherans in Dutch Guiana

It was not until a century later that signs of life were shown by the Protestant Church in Latin America. In 1665 Baron Justinian von Weltz who was the pioneer of Lutheran missions sailed for Dutch Guiana after his pleas for action had been rebuked in his own country, Austria. He soon died in the new country because of the bad climate and conditions.

c. The Moravians in British and Dutch Guiana

In 1735 the Moravians entered British Guiana, and three years later they began missionary operations in Dutch Guiana. They carried on their work until the

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4. John A. Mackay, The Other Spanish Christ, p. 231

end of the century, but it was mostly among the settlers, and the natives were largely neglected.

Two of their missionaries, however, did go inland and form an Indian mission among the Arawak tribe. In ten years they had baptized forty-one Indians. As a whole, they did little of actual foreign mission work. Their religious work was largely among their own people in the colony.

Daniel Enrique Hall, a Latin American, says of this entire Moravian work that "all these attempts were political as well as religious, and in general made no permanent impress on the life of the countries entered."⁵

C. Opportunities Provided for the Evangelical Movement by the Political Liberation (1800-1900)

1. The Immediate Opportunities in the Revolutions and Independence

The next appearance of Protestant Christianity generally coincided with the beginning of the period of revolution in Latin America, and with the awakening of the Church in Europe and America. The Revolution and Independence presented immediate opportunities for the establishment of the Evangelical Movement.

a. New Occasions for Outside Influences to Enter

McLean has pointed out the concurrent nature

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5. Milton Stauffer, ed., *As Protestant Latin America Sees It*, p. 86

of the Protestant advances and the beginning of the Independence Movement.

"The dawn of the Independence era coincided with the awakening of the Church in Europe and America. The political emancipation of Latin America is contemporaneous with the formation of societies for the translation and distribution of the Bible, from which the purest doctrines of human liberty are derived."⁶

The Revolution and the years after the Independence provided a favorable opportunity for the entrance of Protestantism. With Spain's power broken in the New World, there were opportunities for foreign immigration without regard to religion. A number of colonists from foreign countries entered the continent and established themselves along the Atlantic seaboard. In this manner new religious factors could be brought in from the outside.

b. The Awakening and Reaction Within Latin America

Within Latin America the Independence Movements brought a feeling of freedom and an intellectual and political awakening. There was necessarily a break between the patriots and the Church, for the pope had excommunicated those who had participated in the Revolution.⁷ The Roman Catholic Church was opposed to the Independence movement because of the close relationship of the Church and State, and thus the leaders of the revolutions were

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6. McLean, op.cit., p. 111

7. Cf. Neely, op.cit., p. 204-205

also politically opposing the only religion with which they were acquainted. M. Searle Bates has shown the importance of this opposition in his book, Religious Liberty: An Inquiry.

"During the same formative period of the 'twenties and 'thirties, there was considerable political attack upon the Church, largely to complete the breaking down of opposition to the new order of republican freedom."⁸

Through this political revolution which involved an encounter with the Roman Catholic Church, doors were opened for new religious ideas as well as intellectual and political, and thus this was an opportunity for the immediate entrance of Evangelical Christianity

2. The Effect of the Attitude Toward Church and State

Many of the Independence leaders such as Simon Bolivar and San Martin believed in the freedom of conscience and were liberal in their attitude toward other religions. They especially invited Protestants to develop school systems in the liberated countries.

Legally there was no separation of Church and State, and the constitutions of some of the new republics indicated a union of the two. But in those countries where a decisive break was made with the Roman hierarchy as well as with the Spanish monarchy, the Evangelical Movement was far more readily accepted. Daniel Hall has

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8. M. Searle Bates, Religious Liberty: An Inquiry, p. 219

stated this in his discussion of the subject.

"Someone has pointed out that in studying the diverse revolutionary movements in Latin America one discovers that the countries which broke most fully with the power of the Roman Church, as well as with the Spanish monarchy, are those which have since most readily accepted evangelical Christianity, and this in spite of the fact that all these republics, including Brazil, retained a vital connection with the Roman Catholic Church, a connection which, in most cases, precluded the introduction of any other religion."⁹

The constitutions of Argentina and Costa Rica which were accepted during the nineteenth century both give privilege to the Catholic Church. Costa Rica supports Catholicism as the religion of the State, but gives full freedom to other religions. Argentina subsidizes the Church but imposes no unfavorable regulations on worship and teaching of religion. Under conditions such as these Evangelical Christianity was at least able to enter the country with no official opposition. Thus the barriers of previous centuries were eliminated to a certain extent and new opportunity was before the Evangelical Movement.

3. The Response of the Evangelical Church to these Opportunities

The fact that the Evangelical Church did take advantage of these opportunities can be seen by the response which it made. Before the end of the nineteenth century Evangelical missionaries had entered all of the

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9. Stauffer, op.cit., p. 87

Republics.

a. The Geographic Expansion of the Movement

The Evangelical Movement followed generally the same paths that Catholicism had taken. The first establishment of the work was on the East Coast and in the Carribean Republics as these were most accessible to the routes from Europe and from the East Coast of North America. The West Coast of Latin America was open to European immigration and influence just as the East, but because of the longer isolation of the Western Republics as a result of their geographic location, the Catholic Church had a stronger hold on the people, and the establishment of missionary work was more difficult. Such difficulty grew out of the greater fanaticism in belief and expression through the persecution of the Evangelicals.

b. Educational Influences

Mackay has said that "one of the most characteristic and influential aspects of Protestant work in South America has been educational."¹⁰ Protestant schools were established at a time that was particularly favorable to their development and for their supplying of needs which had been neglected by the Catholic Church.

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10. Mackay, op.cit., p. 243

(1). The Failure of Catholic Education

It was the first ideal of the Catholic Church to have many schools, but this soon narrowed to the idea that education was useful only to the upper class, to train for government position, and to train for the priesthood. Generally the educational work suffered in two ways: first, it benefited the Church rather than the nation; and second, it was of no benefit to the masses.¹¹ This failure of Catholicism to meet the needs of the masses in the past provided an opportunity for Evangelical Christianity to develop through educational channels. Educational missionaries were often welcomed by the governments and met with great success among the people.

(2). The Advance of Protestant Education

The first important Evangelical educator to arrive in Latin America was James Thomson, who was not only a representative of the Lancasterian Educational Society of England, but was also an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society. At the time of his arrival in Argentina, the country was particularly open and favorable to new religious ideas. Previously to this time, the Inquisition held strong sway over the types of literature that were circulated, and the Bible was

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11. Cf. Kenneth G. Grubb, An Advancing Church in Latin America, p. 20

forbidden to the masses.

Mr. Thomson arrived shortly after the Revolution. Mackay says that this was an opportune time for his arrival and the establishment of his work.

"The open-mindedness shown by many of the clergy and by the civil and military leaders, the disfavour with which the Vatican regarded the work of the Insurgents, the new desire to become related to the great currents of the world's life, were factors favouring the propagation of Protestantism."¹²

The educational attempts which Mr. Thomson made were warmly received by the authorities. The Lancasterian method which Mr. Thomson represented used the older pupils as the teachers of the younger. Thus the method was particularly adapted to this country where teachers were almost completely lacking.

The schools became so popular that in Buenos Aires alone there were 100 Lancasterian schools with an enrollment of 5000. The new government of Chile then invited him to organize work there, and following that San Martin invited him to Peru. These schools were finally established in Argentina, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Guatemala, and Mexico. The Lancasterian Schools used the Scriptures as reading lessons for the pupils, and all who were contacted and educated through the schools were also brought into contact with the Bible and the pure teachings of Christianity. Thus the Bible was read more

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12. Mackay, op.cit., p. 235

widely than before, and from this a new impulse was given to the distribution of the Scriptures.

c. The Distribution of Scripture

As has already been stated, with the revolt against Spain, the power of the Inquisition over literature in Latin America was also broken. That which had once been forbidden was now permitted to be distributed and read. "It would be impossible," says McLean, "to overstate the contribution of the Bible Societies to the evangelization of Latin America,"¹³ for they worked to bring the Scriptures to all classes throughout the continent. It was the work of the Bible colporteur that prepared the way for the later evangelists. The distribution of the Scriptures was opposed by the clergy as it had been previously, but the influence of the Lancasterian Schools and the continuous effort of the distributor gave the Scriptures wide circulation.

d. A Reinterpretation of Christianity

The most important task of Evangelical Christianity in these countries where the Christian faith was already known in a very different form was to reinterpret that faith. With freedom of religion now accepted in many places, this was possible to a certain degree. The

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13. McLean, op.cit., p. 122

Evangelical Church responded to the opportunities provided by the liberation by direct evangelism and by an attempt to reinterpret in the minds of the masses the teachings of Christianity.

D. The Political Causes of the Recent Rapid Growth
(1900-)

1. World War I

Within the past few decades there has been a phenomenal growth in the Evangelical Movement in Latin America. In the Interpretative Statistical Survey of the World Mission of the Christian Church written in 1938, Kenneth Scott Latourette says:

"..In Latin America the growth has been phenomenal. The number of communicants appears to have multiplied more than seven-fold in the past century and to have trebled in the past thirteen years."¹⁴

Up until the second decade of the twentieth century there was very little social and economic progress in Latin America. In contrast there has been great progress in the last few decades. The First World War brought industrial development, and a certain stable national economy was formed.¹⁵ During this time there was extensive road construction which facilitated travel on a continent that had been made up of many isolated parts.

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14. Rycroft, op.cit., p. 75, quoted from Joseph I Parker, editor, Interpretative Statistical Survey of the World Mission of the Christian Church
15. Cf. John Ritchie, Ferment in South America, p. 11

The universal unrest stirred up by World War I had deepening effects in the South American Countries. At the Congress on Christian Work in South America held in Uruguay in 1925, this was shown definitely. One of the reports says the following:

"They were challenged at the outset by the general confession of Protestant Christendom that the cause of the War was the failure of the Churches faithfully to live and communicate, and of the so-called Christian nations adequately to apply the plain teachings of Christ. The disillusionment of the thinking classes regarding historical Christianity, as they knew it was, of course, complete."¹⁶

This disillusionment led to a new opening in the presentation of the Evangelical message. It did not bring a turning of the masses to Christianity, but there was a renewed interest which was favorable to the Evangelical Movement. At the Congress in 1925, it was the general feeling that Protestantism had a greater opportunity at that time than ever before. Thus Evangelical missions were benefited by the internal unrest and national thought. The social and economic development of the countries was the basis for the opportunity for the Protestant Church to advance in Latin America.

2. Governmental Attitudes Toward Religion

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, many of the republics of Latin America

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16. Robert E. Speer, et al, Christian Work in South America, Vol. I, p. 53

were forming their national constitutions. While many of them still maintained the relationship of Church and State, most of them made some provision for freedom for other religions. During the nineteenth century Argentina and Costa Rica already had given assurance of religious freedom to those outside of the Catholic Church.

By the constitution of 1906, Ecuador provided for the "liberty of conscience in all its aspects and manifestations in so far as they are not contrary to morality and public order."¹⁷

Chile has no legal barriers in the way of non-Catholic religions, and does not restrict religious worship or teaching.¹⁸

Peru firmly supports the Catholic Church, requiring mass every morning in all public schools. Non-Catholic children may be excused, but it is at the risk of ostracism and persecution. The Catholic Church even has sought to have the Protestant Church secure Catholic teachers for instruction, but the law does not specify that this must be so.¹⁹

Uruguay separated Church and State in the constitution of 1934, and although she gives special

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17. Bates, op.cit., p. 81

18. Cf. ibid., p. 79

19. Cf. ibid., p. 80

privileges to the hierarchy, she does not bar other faiths. "Uruguay has earned the repute of being one of the freest societies of Latin America,"²⁰ says Bates.

Bates says further that Colombia is held by the Catholic Church in its national life.

"Colombia is notorious for the long hold of reactionary clerics upon education. As recently as 1934 it was said by a careful scholar that the Catholic Church has been more tenacious in its hold upon national and civil life in Colombia than in any other Latin American country."²¹

The constitution of 1936, however, reads that no one shall be molested because of his religious opinions, and that liberty of worship, when it is not contrary to Christian morality or to the law, is guaranteed.

Venezuela, in the constitution of 1936, also guarantees religious liberty. This country, however, has also been strongly held by the Catholic Church.

Honduras also guarantees freedom of religion, and although there is some persecution of Protestants by Catholics, there is very little intolerance there.

In Bolivia there is much religious persecution in spite of the fact that the constitution of 1938 guarantees religious liberty, freedom to assemble, and freedom to worship

Paraguay looks upon the Catholic Church as the

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20. Ibid., p. 79

21. Ibid., p. 82

State Church, but she makes constitutional provision for religious toleration.

Nicaragua, Salvador, and Haiti all accepted their constitutions in 1939 and made provisions for freedom of religion. In Haiti, however, the Catholic Church is given special privileges, and in Nicaragua there is much intolerance.

By her constitution of 1940, Cuba requires the separation of Church and State and guarantees religious freedom. Panama, in 1941, recognized Catholicism as the religion of the majority, but there is freedom for other religions. The Dominican Republic also recognizes Catholicism, but again there is freedom for religious conscience and worship.

Mexico has been one of the countries most fully under the power of the Catholic Church. Bates clearly describes her present position as follows when he speaks of the understanding between Church and State:

"The understanding means that the government is more truly representing the Mexican people, their desires and needs; that a reasonable, if not a perfect liberty is secured by the Church from a willing government; that the large body of Mexican believers, actual and potential, hold a liberty of conscience and worship that has long been withheld or curtailed;..."²²

Thus when the countries and governments themselves ceased to hold any restrictions against the Evan-

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gelicals, then the latter could advance legally in the continent where previously they had been banned. The attitude of the governments toward religion is a determining factor in influencing the development of that religion.

3. World War II

With the coming of the Second World War, there was great progress in industrial development in a land where development had been greatly retarded. Thus within the land there was a ferment in economics, education, and politics. All of the national problems provided a possibility for the Evangelical Church to bring a solution to them.

At the same time as these national problems were apparent in South America, the rest of the world was also in a turmoil. The war which had closed a number of the mission fields, especially in Asia, had helped to direct a certain amount of attention to Latin America. Mission boards at home placed more emphasis during the war years on missions in Latin America, and an increasingly large number of missionaries were sent there. When they were unable to enter some fields because of the war, Latin America proved to be a very fertile field in which to work.

E. Summary

This chapter has been an attempt to study the development of the Evangelical Movement in the light of the historical development of the Latin American Countries. First it was approached from the early attempts to bring Protestantism to the South American continent. Next the development of the movement was viewed in relation to the opportunities provided by the political liberation, and finally, the more recent developments which have contributed to the rapid growth of the Evangelical Church were studied.

It was found that during the early history of Latin America, Protestantism, which had not developed a program of foreign missions, was unable to cope with the barriers set against it by the policy of Spain in regard to her possessions, and therefore very little was accomplished. With the liberation from Spain, which also meant a certain break with the Catholic Church, new opportunities for growth were opened, but some of the historical influences still lingered on to prevent a rapid expanse.

Recently, however, there has been an outstanding growth within Latin America. Again some of the causes of this growth may be found within the development of the country, but there are still barriers which point back to early historical causes for keeping Protestantism

from Latin America, and the Evangelical Church still must face these barriers.

CHAPTER III

SPECIAL PROBLEMS TO BE FACED BY EVANGELICAL MISSIONS

AS A RESULT OF THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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AS A RESULT OF THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A. Introduction

It is especially true in Latin America that her inhabitants are living in past traditions. The situation of this continent is such that the people are still victims of the past as well as of the present. The whole tenor of life is based on past characteristics and tendencies which have been grounded into the life of the people.

As a result of this condition created by the historical background, there are social, educational, and religious problems which touch the lives of the entire population. These problems present a special concern to Evangelical Missions because of the fact that in certain respects they limit their work and in others they determine the type of work that is done and how it is approached.

It is the purpose of this chapter to study these special problems that must be faced by Evangelical Missions as a direct result of the influence of the historical background. The social problems will be surveyed in respect to the way in which they are determined by the historical background. Next, the educational needs

will be studied in the light of past traditions which still influence the development of education. Finally, the problem of paganizing influences in religion will be shown in connection with the problem before the Evangelical Movement in reinterpreting Christ to the masses of people.

B. Social Problems

The social problem in Latin America is so universal that it effects all of the inhabitants. Again it is apparent that the historical background has been a principal factor in the social welfare of the continent and in determining the approach which must be made in finding a solution to the problems. The issue before the Evangelical Movement centers in the social status of the inhabitants and the moral standards that have become prevalent throughout the centuries.

1. The Social and Economic Problem of the Indian

At the Montevideo Congress on Christian Work in South America held in 1925, William I. Haven, who was then General Secretary of the American Bible Society, said in his report on the Indians of South America that "possibly nowhere in the world are the contrasts between the high lights and the shadows more intense than in South America."¹ While there are parts of the continent

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1. Speer, ed., Christian Work in South America, Vol.I, p. 147

that have a spirit of progress, still there are, in the same republics, large groups of Indians whose social and economic condition is very poor.

The position of the Indian varies in different parts of Latin America. During the Conquest many Indian tribes were pushed back into the interior of the continent where they were removed from the streams of life of the rest of the countries. Many of these still live in primitive ways filled with pagan superstitions. In other parts of the continent something has been done for their welfare. In places there has been government interest, the Roman Catholic Church has worked in their behalf, and Evangelical Missions have made some contact with them. However, in 1925, the following statement was made before the Montevideo Congress:

"..On the whole, almost nothing has been done, at least in an organized, systematic, comprehensive way, and the people are living feebly and like a stagnant stream, tilling the soil, fishing in the streams, hunting in the forest, by methods that have not changed for centuries...Their minds are full of the superstitions of pagan peoples, fearing the presence of spirits in all the mysterious operations of nature."²

More recently, John Ritchie wrote:

"The condition of these Indians has changed little since the period of the Conquest, when they were despoiled of their heritage and reduced to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for their conquerors. Despite much legislation intended to protect them, they still live down-trodden and exploited..

"Their present condition is generally of extreme

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2. Ibid., p. 150

poverty despite continuous toils, ignorance even when they have desired knowledge, and a profound sense of inferiority which tends to paralyze them when they might improve their lot. They have suffered persistent injustice at the hands of the white man until they find it hard to trust him."³

The economic condition of the Indian is very low. This situation points back to the colonial days when the encomienda system was monopolizing the land and laborers. Today many of the Indians are attached to large ranches in a state of peonage. Law does not permit them to be compelled to stay on these estates, but unless they are abused, many of them fear to leave the protection they have. In return for lots which they are given to cultivate, they give so many days free service on the farm. In this way the semi-feudal system that was introduced by the conquistadores still exists.

Religiously the Indian is claimed by the Catholic Church, but actually he is still greatly under the influence of paganism. Usually he is ignorant of the teaching of the Catholic Church, and instead continues to practice pagan rituals and ceremonies and attributes a pagan meaning to the rites of the Catholic Church. Haven says that "in the celebration of religious observances the Indian finds his deepest degradation."⁴ During these festivals alcoholic Chicha is supplied and

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3. John Ritchie, The Indians in Spanish America, p. 2
4. Speer, ed., Christian Work in South America, Vol. I, p. 171

pagan dances continue for several days. The religious practices most common and characteristic of their life are often associated with drunkenness. The clergy, instead of combating these evil influences, have taken advantage of them. Haven describes these observances as follows:

"During these drunken orgies the priest can be seen mingling with the people, collecting his fees of silver, grain, poultry, or sheep. When the supply of alcohol is exhausted, and the Indian's money is all gone, he wanders back home to his little hut in a pitiable condition. Such is the "Christianity" that prevails among the aboriginal inhabitants of these highland republics."⁵

Religious festivals and the drunkenness which accompany them have probably done more to impoverish the Indian than any other influence.⁶

2. Moral Standards

The social customs and standards of the aboriginal society were broken down by the European adventurers who came to Latin America during the Conquest. In their place was introduced immorality and vice.⁷ In spite of the Church and the priest who accompanied the Conquistadores, there was a license which lowered the social and moral life of the people. The lowered standards became implanted in the early society, and although they were

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5. Ibid., p. 172

6. Cf. Ritchie, op.cit., p. 3

7. Cf. Neely, op.cit., p. 122

modified somewhat in the passing of time, they have not been removed and there is still a very low standard of morality. Deceitfulness in dealing with others is prevalent. Drunkenness pervades all classes of society. Illegitimacy is very high, and polygamy common. Neely says that "...the grossest form of immorality abounds and is a matter of common repute and often there is little care to disguise the vileness."⁸

a. Reasons for Moral Laxity

As was shown in the preceding paragraph, immorality was not condemned by the conquerors, and the very base nature of their characters may account to a certain extent for the low standards in these countries now. The Inquisition, with its secretive and deceitful influence, made every man distrustful of his neighbor, and his caution and distrust has carried down through the generations of Latin Americans.⁹ Ignorance, also, played a large part in determining the place of the evil conditions which exist. The lack of proper education has continued through the centuries and still is not available to a great percentage of the population. Perhaps one of the most important influences, however, is that of the Catholic Church which has perverted Christian-

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8. Ibid., pp. 127-128

9. Cf. Ibid., p. 133

ity in the thoughts of the people. The fact that it has so often compromised with paganism and neglected to present the pure teachings of Jesus has influenced the moral standards of the country. The influence of the reputation of the priesthood also accounts for low morals. Their example of indolence and corruption has a demoralizing effect upon the people.

b. Attitude of the Catholic Church

The Roman Catholic Church has never risen against the impurity found in these countries, nor striven to remedy them. Instead it has fostered illegitimacy by the fact that in some countries it refuses to recognize civil marriages and yet demands such high marriage fees that the poor are unable to pay them. In speaking of the conditions for which the Catholic Church must bear responsibility, Speer makes the following statement:

"It is not true to say that the present moral conditions in South America exist in spite of the Roman Catholic Church as immorality in the United States exists in spite of the Churches here. The South American Church has never waged any such war against impurity as has been waged in lands where Protestant Churches are found, or in Roman Catholic Ireland. It has, by its refusal to recognize the validity of civil marriage and by its own extortionate marriage fees, directly fostered illegitimacy. Its priesthood ...has come out of the life it was supposed to raise and has accommodated itself to the moral standards surrounding it."¹⁰

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10. Speer, South American Problems, p. 146

Nor has the Roman Catholic Church brought education to the masses or set up high standards for them, but on the contrary has flourished where ignorance is great. By the fact that the Church has decided that a lie is a venial and not a mortal sin, deceit and untruthfulness are fostered.¹¹ The Church has never taken a stand against the prevalent alcoholism or endeavored to check or control it. Even Church festivals use it to excess. While temperance in its use is counseled, nothing is done to remove the vice which is especially powerful among the Indians.

C. Educational Needs

Latin America has been very slow in advancing in education, yet universities were organized on the Southern continent before they were in North America. The educational traditions which exist today were brought from Europe by the priests who accompanied the explorers. Many of the difficult educational problems have come down from the Colonial period with distinct characteristics transmitted from the early traditions. Thus the problems of modern popular education are embedded in the traditions of the past.

1. The Traditions of the Past

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11. McLean, op.cit., p. 98

As can be expected by the nature of the work of the priest during the Conquest, the clergy controlled the schools as well as nearly all the cultural life of the Colonies. Education was then considered to be only for the upper class whites, the aristocracy, and the privileged. Thus, instead of education which benefits the nation, the traditional point of view has been education which meets only a small, select class.

The Inquisition kept trends of popular thought from entering education. Its purpose was to protect the mind from the influence of secular and heretical ideas which might disturb the dogmatic nature of the Church's teachings. As a result, the courses of study were usually ecclesiastical.

The emphasis of this traditional education was on the literary and professional type of learning which was designed for those who had leisure and wealth and who, as a rule, entered the clergy or became government officials.¹² Therefore the program was mostly theological in character and based upon dogmatism; it was an education in traditional opinions which kept the population under the monarchial control of Church and State.

2. Problems of Popular Education

Again the historical background has been an

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12. Cf. Rycroft, op.cit., pp. 124, 125

influence in the development of education. The Catholic Church has always opposed compulsory education, maintaining that instruction is the duty of the home and not of the State. This attitude has been one of the greatest obstacles to the implantation of popular education. As a result the masses of the people are illiterate, and it is a problem of popular education, according to Mr. Haven, to bridge the gulf which yawns between .."the highly educated, very able, yet relatively small in numbers, and the relatively ignorant middle class also limited in numbers, together with the densely ignorant masses."¹³

While most education is now out of the hands of the Catholic Church, there are still problems which have been carried down from the traditional type of ecclesiastical education. The type of curricula and educational methods are included in one of those problems. The dogmatic type of instruction which was prevalent in the first schools was weak in character building. Rycroft says that Latin American educators even now often admit that they instruct rather than educate and feel a dissatisfaction with present school programs which have not laid sufficient emphasis on character.¹⁴ The problem of popular education is to provide education that will

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13. Speer, ed., Christian Work in South America, Vol. I, pp. 234-235

14. Cf. Rycroft, op.cit., p. 128

produce students of character who make good citizens.

D. Religious Interpretation

The basic problem to be faced by the Evangelical Movement in Latin America as the result of the historical background is that of religious interpretation. Christianity is not a new religion, nor is Christ unknown to the people. But the Christianity which is common to the people is mingled with surviving elements of paganism and has been greatly misinterpreted by the dominant Roman Catholic Church. The religion which the people know is not the pure religion of Christ, and it has little application in their lives. What the religion actually consists of is described by Barclay.

"..The longer one lives amongst them, and the better one gets to know them, the more one realizes that their Christianity is, to a great extent, merely a thin veneer, that fundamentally their religious conceptions, and especially their ritual and ceremonies, are survivals--degenerate, much changed, and with most of their significance lost--of those of their ancestors."¹⁵

1. The Presentation of Christianity

Christ, in Latin America, is not a single, living Christ, but is worshipped in many forms. Different regions of the continent have their own Christs, and often

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15. Barclay, op.cit., p. 168, quoted from Thomas Gann and J. Eric Thompson, The History of the Maya, pp. 250 f.

there are several in one place, each with a personality all its own. These deities, given the name of Christ, are actually some of the pagan gods which have been taken into the religion upheld by the Catholic Church. Surviving pagan influences are very strong in the religion of Latin America today.

a. Surviving Pagan Traditions

Paganism was in Latin America as one of the first influences in the lives of the inhabitants and still is a factor in their religious worship. Pagan cults have survived in contemporary Catholicism in several ways. In the early days of the Conquest, pagan dances were taken over into Christianity as a deliberate means of approach to the natives. Barclay quotes from Pedro de Gante in describing this approach.

"By the grace of God, I began to understand them and to see how they must be won. I noted that in their worship of their gods, they were always singing and dancing before them. Always, before a victim was sacrificed to the idol, they sang and danced before the image. Seeing this and that all their songs were addressed to the gods, I composed very solemn songs regarding the law of God and the faith, how God became man in order to free humanity, and how he was born of a virgin, Mary...Likewise, I gave them certain patterns to paint on their shawls for the dances and songs which they sang. Thus they were dressed, gaily or in mourning, or for victory..."¹⁶

In this manner, pagan dances were taken into Catholic

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16. Ibid., p. 160, quoted from Braden, Religious Aspects of the Conquest of Mexico, p. 155

Christianity and perpetuated under the very guardianship of the clergy.

Pagan traditions also were perpetuated through the religious festivals and feasts and through the pagan custom of bringing sacrifices and offerings to the images. Idolatrous ceremonies were recognized by the Catholic priests as a part of the rites of the Church. In the place of the idols which the people had worshipped, the priests substituted the images of the Roman Catholic Church. But "the savage imagination," says McLean, "pierces beneath the tawdry trappings of the modern image and sees¹⁷ the ancestral god beneath."

Paganism also survived in the Catholic Church by the continuation of objects and shrines under Christian names. In the place of the object which the Indians associated with his own religion was substituted something connected with Catholicism. Roman Church buildings were built in the place of pagan temples. In many places tribal gods are worshipped along with the Christian God. There are many Christs, Marys, and saints, and each of them is worshipped for some special purpose, or because that particular personality fulfills some specific religious purpose.

Thus the God and Christ of Christianity have been crowded out of the supposedly dominant religion

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17. McLean, op.cit., p. 90

of Latin America by the pagan traditions which survive in the worship of the Catholic Church today.

b. Catholic Insufficiency

The exploration of Latin America was undertaken as a spiritual as well as geographical conquest, but the spirit of the living Christ was not translated into the life of the new continent. Instead the Church compromised the standards of Christianity to the level of the masses of the conquered peoples. From the fourteenth to the nineteenth century the Catholic Church had no rival in bringing Christianity to Latin America, but the existing religion which is nominally Catholic is a confused and erroneous mixture that cannot be classified as Christianity. McLean describes the approach of the Catholic Church in this connection.

"..the Spanish Church was a proselyting organization which sought to make conformists rather than converts. Subtle in compromise, she adjusted her requirements to the level of the conquered multitudes. Her standards were not the teaching and example of Christ but the fair average of human morality. Failure to achieve was not considered a sin but rather a misfortune that called for pity; sin was an offense against the Church. By the law of spiritual gravitation she was dragged down by the masses she failed to uplift."¹⁸

Thus the true teachings of Jesus were neglected and the people have not been uplifted morally or intellectually. The superstitions which the Catholic Church permitted

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18. Ibid..

to be retained have made an intelligent and spiritual religion impossible.

Thus Christianity has not been given in its truth to the Latin American Republics by the Catholic Church because of its own attitude toward the pagan traditions which continue to make the existing religion a confusion of heathen ideas and practices.

2. Lack of Spiritual Dynamic for Living

Browning says that "Whatever it may have been in the past, Roman Catholicism in Latin America no longer functions spiritually."¹⁹ As a result, the religion of Latin America is lacking in spiritual power for living and does not take hold on life. Documents from the Montevideo Congress include the following quotation as an example of the lack of spiritual influence in Latin America:

"Religion, as such, does not influence, and I doubt that it has ever seriously interested the lives of our people. So-called believers have never seen in it other than rites and ceremonies; unbelievers, nothing better than superstition. Consequently, religion has never furnished to the first-named any efficient control of conduct, nor to the second any matter worthy of serious attention."²⁰

The reason for this lack of spiritual dynamic lies in the fact that the Church in Latin America has not possessed the transforming power over life which is in the

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19. Browning, op.cit., p. 159

20. Ibid., p. 160, quoted from documents of the Montevideo Congress

resurrected Christ, and therefore it cannot be a transforming factor in life and thought. The Christ which is presented to the people is a dead Christ overshadowed by the other deities of paganism, and consequently they have been deprived of the knowledge of the risen Lord in Whom lie the resources of spiritual power. As a result of this the masses of people have no religion which they can practice in their daily conduct. The attitude of the Church toward moral problems which have already been discussed shows the degree in which religion has been divorced from life, and a religion which has no connection with thought and conduct can have no power for living.

E. Protestant Approach to These Problems

The Evangelical Movement necessarily has grown upon the historical background of the continent. Those things which have caused problems for the various countries have caused problems in the establishment of the Evangelical Movement. Protestantism not only has been limited by the nature of the historical background, but the approach which it has taken in meeting these problems also has been determined by the same factors.

1. Limitations because of the Background

Historically the Evangelical Movement was greatly delayed in its entrance to Latin America because

of factors which kept out all foreign influences. In the same way it has been limited in its approach to many of the problems before the inhabitants of the republics.

The very attitude of the masses of people toward religion is a limiting obstacle to be surmounted by the Evangelical Church in approaching these problems. McLean explains it as follows:

"The priests and confessors have a relentless grip on woman, the home, and social customs. The absurd teaching of the clergy concerning the miraculous power of saints, et cetera, has produced a revulsion of feeling against the wonder-working power of God and men try to explain the universe as the outgrowth of matter. When matters of supreme concern are under debate and everything is doubt and negation, the average man remains neutral."²¹

Early in the twentieth century, Speer wrote that one of the reasons for the slow development of the Evangelical work was the hold which the Roman Catholic Church had

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upon the nation and the people. This control was an actual domination of the social and political life.

At that time he also wrote that "the power of the priests has sufficed to cut down our schools and hinder the growth of the work."²³

The traditional attitude of the Catholic Church has consistently been a limiting power to the Evangelical work. In keeping the Indian in a state of poverty, ig-

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21. McLean, op.cit., p. 171

22. Robert E. Speer, Missions in South America, p. 100

23. Ibid.

norance, drunkenness, and paganism, it has caused the Protestant Church to begin its work with a social attitude to overcome. In accommodating itself to the moral standards of the masses and even perpetuating some of the vices, the Catholic Church presents the Evangelical Movement with the problem of taking a stand contrary to that which is upheld by another body which claims the Christian religion. In opposing popular education, the Catholic Church limits the power of the Protestants in approaching the masses on an intellectual basis. The Evangelical Church is limited in its approach to Latin American religious thought because its teachings cannot be based upon those already known to the people, and instead the Movement must work in the face of paganism and misinterpreted Christianity.

2. Evangelical Approach Determined by Background

Just as the Evangelical Movement is limited in its approach to the problems of missions in Latin America by the nature of the historical background, so the nature of its approach to these problems is also determined by the background on which it must build.

Little has been done by Evangelical Missions in the case of the Indian. In fact, the Movement has only touched the borders of Indian territory. The tribes who were driven back by the explorers during the Conquest of Latin America now live in the interior of

the continent in isolated groups separated by differences²⁴ in customs and dialect. The greatest difficulties which face the Evangelical Movement are therefore due to geographic inaccessibility and their moral, spiritual, and economic needs. These very difficulties, however, form the basis for Evangelical Missions among the Indians.

Young says that Protestant Missions have been largely unsuccessful among the Indians and have failed²⁵ to reach the whole of their life. In recent years, however, plans have been made for more extensive work among the Indians. The programs presented to the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America by the Andean Commission outline work in the fields of agriculture, medicine,²⁶ education, recreation, and church development. In this way they are facing the system of peonage under which the Indian is practically enslaved. Because one of the basic problems in working with the Indian is his status in the encomienda system, Evangelical missions must face this problem in their approach to missions among these people.

Ritchie says that the problem of reaching the Indian with the Gospel in an adequate way is not a simple one.

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24. Cf. High, op.cit., p. 138

25. Cf. Herrick Black Young, On this We Build in Latin America, pp. 6-7

26. See Recommendations of the Andean Commission, Part I, pp. 1-2

"He requires to have much more done for him than only to bring him a Christian testimony of conversion. Just as our Lord did not confine His ministry to theological or credal teaching, indeed, as His method could not be described as credal, so any effort to reach these Indians, if it is to win them to faith and a better life, must manifest a sincere and kindly interest in his welfare at many points of his clamant need."²⁷

The moral condition of the South American countries demands the presence of the Evangelical Movement in a form that will battle against the situation of sin and unrighteousness which are not condemned by the Catholic Church. Speer says that there are "hundreds of men in South America today who declare that they never received any standard of purity or any power of righteousness until they heard the Gospel from the Evangelical Missionaries."²⁸ The Protestant Churches have a battle to fight against the immoral tendencies which do not die in a day.

The Protestant missionary enterprise also must bring to Latin America the necessary stimulus to education for the masses. The great percentage of illiteracy makes necessary the duty of educating all the people with thoroughness and with high standards, and of relating education to religion. This education is of a type that will educate in character as well as instruct in fundamental subjects. The professional and dogmatic

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27. Ritchie, op.cit., p. 4

28. Speer, Missions in South America, p. 151

type of instruction advanced by the Catholic Church must needs be supplanted with education for the masses of people.

Again the nature of the historical background has determined the approach the Evangelical Movement must take in presenting Christianity to the people. Because of the confusion of paganism and false Christian teachings in the religion which now dominates Latin America, the Evangelical Movement is compelled to start anew with the teachings of Christianity regarding God and Christ, and the teachings must be presented with such vitality that they may be translated into life. Evangelical Missions have not completed their task in solving all the problems of the historical background, but their goals are determined by the nature of the problems which have existed so long.

F. Summary

Some of the problems of the Evangelical Movement in Latin America are enlarged by the fact that they have grown out of the historical background of the country. Therefore, the Protestant approach to these problems is limited and determined by the background in certain aspects. It was the purpose of this chapter to study the social, educational, and religious problems in the light of the determining factors in their background.

The social and economic conditions of the Indian and the moral standards of the countries are largely an outgrowth of early historical conditions which have been perpetuated for several centuries. The present educational situation is the result of past traditions of education which have not been overcome and which must be combatted by the Evangelical approach to education. The religious standards have grown out of the religious interpretations of traditional Catholicism combined with the pagan traditions of the aboriginal tribes. The Evangelical approach to these problems must be in the light of their background, and is to a certain extent determined by the background.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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It has been the purpose of this study to view the factors in history that have been influential in the development of the Evangelical Movement in Latin America. Before the discovery of the New World, certain aspects in Spanish life were so developing that they would later have an influence in the Spanish Colonies. The Spanish conception of the position of the monarch carried a vital relationship with the status of the Colonies in relationship to the King. Economic policies in Spain were carried over into the governing of the New World, and the social classes also followed the lines already drawn in Spain. One of the most important influences, however, was that of the Catholic Church---an influence which became dominant in Latin America just as it had been in Spain.

Within Latin America the social, economic, and political patterns that were to be followed were established during the early part of the Conquest. From the beginning the Indian tribes were subjugated and exploited by the conquerors, becoming the laboring class, doing the manual labor for the Spaniards, and having no legal status in the government of the Colonies.

During this first period of the history of Latin America, the social patterns were laid with a distinct division of classes. The wealthy and privileged

were few in number, and the masses of people were exploited and left without social, economic, and educational privileges.

The religions in Latin America have had a more important influence than any other single factor. Because Catholicism was the state religion of Spain, it was brought to the Colonies and advanced as the only religion. All the aboriginal inhabitants were claimed by the Catholic Church and supposedly gave up their pagan worship. On the contrary, however, the religion which now exists in Latin America is a mixture of Catholicism and pagan traditions which have survived in the Church.

The limitations and advances of Protestantism have very definitely been influenced by the historical developments within the continent itself. At first, Catholicism was the only religion allowed in the Spanish Colonies, and the Inquisition acted to suppress any who should advance heretical ideas. Because the Protestant Church at this time had just grown out of the Reformation, it had no program for foreign missions. Therefore, any Protestant groups that did enter Latin America acted only on a small scale, and were soon suppressed or driven out of the continent.

With the dawning of the Independence and coming of the political liberation from Spain, there were new opportunities for the advancement of the Evangelical

Movement. With the power of Spain broken, there were occasions for outside influences to enter, and within Latin America herself there was an awakening that was beneficial to the acceptance of new ideas. That the Evangelical Church did respond to the opportunities of this time can be seen by the fact that before the end of the nineteenth century there were Evangelical groups in every republic. The Protestants were able to work through the advancement of education which the Catholic Church had denied to the masses, and through the distribution of Scriptures which previously had been forbidden.

World War I brought internal unrest which was beneficial to the advancement of Christianity, and at this time the opportunities for the advancement of the Evangelical Movement were greater than ever they had been before. Changing governmental attitudes towards freedom of religion and worship opened greater opportunities for the work of the Protestant Church. World War II also brought an awareness of the needs of the Southern Continent before the Churches in America, and greater numerical advancement has been made in recent years because of the fact that mission boards have been responding in a greater way to the opportunities in Latin America.

The Evangelical Movement has been influenced not only in its development by factors in the history of

of Latin America, but the type of problems which must be faced and the methods which must be used to face them are influenced also. The status of the Indians has remained the same since the days of the Conquest, and the methods which the Evangelicals use must be pointed to meet the needs as they have grown out of the historical background. The moral standards of the entire continent have been on a low basis and have not been improved since the coming of the conquerors. Nor has the Catholic Church acted to improve the conditions, but has, on the other hand, only accomodated itself to the existing level.

Education today still is influenced by the traditions of the past, and it is the problem of the Evangelical Movement to work against the limitations of illiteracy and an educational philosophy based upon dogmatic instruction. Instead of education for the few privileged members of the upper class, there must be popular education which will contribute to character as well as to information.

The most important problem which is before the Evangelical Movement as a result of the historical background, however, is that of presenting a vital Christianity to the people. Because the religion upheld by the Catholic Church is filled with pagan traditions which have survived and been accepted into the ritual and ceremony of the Church, the Evangelical Church must rein-

terpret Christianity to the people in terms of the true teachings of the Bible, and in such a manner that will present a spiritual dynamic that will reach into all phases of life.

Thus in its historical development and in its approach to the problems of the mission field, the course of the Evangelical Movement has been effected greatly by the historical background of Latin America.

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